

A LEARNED BISHOP

Continued from first page.

and fixed determination to conquer. His great enemy here was the lukewarmness of the people, but with his eloquence and his earnestness he soon found his way into the hearts and consciences of the people, and before surrendering his charge to go into another field, he had built a commodious church edifice, conducted a number of revivals, collected large sums of money and made large accessions to the church's membership.

His next charge was at Augusta, Georgia, where he was stationed at Trinity church. Here his previous experiences were repeated. Apathy and absence of progression, a dulling of spiritual sense were at once apparent and he again set to work manfully. He in a very short time had so stirred the blood of these people, and aroused them to such activity that they became first ashamed of their inadequate and unhandsome place of worship and under his leadership built a beautiful new church edifice, but took new and higher views of the potential forces of a compact and harmonious Christian organization in attracting converts and in elevating the character and the modes of life of people who are brought into contact with them, even if not of a similar faith.

Such men as Elder Williams, could not be permitted, however successful, to remain in purely pastoral work when the growing numerical and financial prosperity and the higher consequent status of the church demanded men of his character and calibre in her highest seats. It followed therefore, that in 1894, while still serving Trinity Church, he was elected the Sixth Bishop of this church when he was but thirty-six years of age and had served but thirteen years as deacon and elder.

Strong features in Bishop Williams' life are the warm friendship and admiration accorded to him by his fellow clergymen, and his unusual popularity in the General Conferences of the organization. His election as Bishop was accomplished on the first ballot by a substantial majority, and the vote was later made unanimous. This is the tribute accorded to him by the men who know him best. When one seeks to discover the causes underlying this almost unprecedented success of so young a man as the Bishop and considers how, step by step, without substantial error, his life has gone forward from one degree of grace and usefulness to another and a loftier, culminating at so early an age in the realization of what must be the aim of every aspiring servant in the Master's vineyard, he comes to perceive that something greater than pulpit oratory, something loftier than mere grace of manner, something grander even than the expression of faith in an over-ruling Providence, was essential to the accomplishment of this result.

Bishop Williams would have been a success in any career; his forceful personality would have compelled for him the rewards this world yields to the successful man. We find the solution in Bishop Williams' personal character in the maintenance of his high moral tone, in his popular appreciation of his exalted call to the saving of souls, the power to impress upon both clergy and laity his absolute sincerity and singularity of purpose; and above and beyond all else his eminent and sound common sense. The Bishop gives evidence of living for a long period of years to adorn the pulpit, to bring honor to his race and to be an example of the higher life which is possible of attainment even here amid the temptations and harrowing cares of our daily life.

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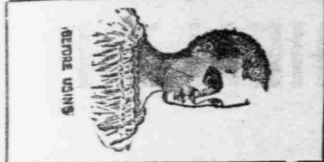
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